• Everyone maxed out on Hadid's Maxxi: Glancey: it's "her best work yet" and "a brave project"; Dyckhoff: it's "delirious, magnificent, a sculpture to inhabit...the very definition of iconic"; Merrick: "stunning."

• Not to be outdone, Woodman finds Caruso St John's Nottingham Contemporary "an extraordinary building"; and Long says getting the details right gives it "a sense of fineness and quality that is rare in this country."

• Three L.A. cities vie for Eli Broad's expanded museum plans - and his promise to hire "an internationally renowned architect."

• An architectural historian explains why Dutch mosque design is misunderstood, eroding the freedom to express one's religious identity in the Netherlands.

• Is suburbia really the new utopia?

• A new eco-friendly library in Silver Lake, CA, fits into its historic neighborhood - and still appeals to its "hip demographic."

• An eyeful of the winning design for King's Cross gasometer (and the runners-up).

• Filling the Void: Architects push 'pencil-ready' stimulus projects as large-scale construction projects wind down...Greater, "planning for the future" could redefine the successes we see in this country.

• Zaha Hadid's stairway into the future: With its swooping curves, impossible angles and haunting views, Maxxi is her best work yet...she hopes it will be fashion-proof...has reserved her architectural firepower for the interior...This is a brave project, and little short of incredible...By Jonathan Glancey [slide show]-Guardian (UK)

• Zaha Hadid's museum opens in Rome: Designed in 1999, Hadid's Maxxi building is still incomplete as Rome's grandiose building plans grind to a halt...this building needs no dramatising...it is delirious, magnificent, a sculpture to inhabit — a phantasmagorical landscape...Put art inside, though, and I fear the building might explode...the very definition of iconic. By Tom Dyckhoff- The Times (UK)

• Zaha hits Rome: ...€150m Maxxi museum of contemporary art is up, and stunning...the well spring, the scribbled DNA that has informed Hadid's later work...The weird thing about Maxxi is the way it so vividly relates to her early student drawings, yet also demonstrates a move away from them. By Jay Merrick- Independent (UK)

• Eli Broad expands plans for his Westside museum: Beverly Hills, Santa Monica and a third, unnamed Westside location are vying to be the contemporary art institution's home...would hire "an internationally renowned architect." - Los Angeles Times

• With a new dorm, plans for an arts center and other projects, the University of Chicago builds a bridge across the moat of the Midway...the surge of construction as a whole is praiseworthy...For all their individual distinction, however, these and other buildings don't come close to making a coherent or lively place. By Blair Kamin — Krueck & SextonOWP; Helmut Jahn; Goody Clancy; Tod Williams Billie Tsien; James Carpenter; Ross Barney Associates [images, links]- Chicago Tribune

• Building Design editor attempts to demolish climate change argument: Amanda Baillieu has laid bare her utter contempt for environmentalism...but failed to construct a solid argument...Naturally enough, rival magazine Architects' Journal issued a repost..."Amanda Baillieu's BD editorial is full of hot air" [links]- Guardian (UK)

• Dutch mosque design misunderstood: Traditional mosques...express unwillingness to integrate. That is what Dutch people often think. But research by architectural historian Eric Roose shows that those who commission the design of Dutch mosques only want to express what Islamic movement they belong to. [images]- Radio Netherlands

• Suburbia: the new utopia? After years of sneery criticism, old prejudices about the suburbs are being replaced with the notion that they are a source of pride...these much maligned outposts are actually great places. - Guardian (UK)

• New Silver Lake library designed with community in mind: The sleek, eco-friendly structure fits in with the neighborhood's historic architecture and hip demographic. — MEA Molfovy Michal & Cox Architects - Los Angeles Times

• Architects should resign from bad schemes, says outgoing Cabe chairman John Sorrell...to prevent bad buildings being built...claimed these new architectural values would help England to progress from an age of anxiety to an era of delight. - BD/Building Design (UK)

• orchids & Onions: Modesty spoke louder than monuments in this year’s crop of San Diego’s versions of the Oscars and...
Call for entries: European Prize for Urban Public Space: biennial competition organized by six European institutions to recognize and encourage the recovery projects and defense of public space; deadline: January 29, 2010 - Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona (CCCB)

-- Tadao Ando: Punta della Dogana, Francois Pinault Foundation, Venice, Italy
-- Book: "Eye of the Leopard" by Dereck Joubert & Beverly Joubert